



M E D I A R E L E A S E

STATE OF TENNESSEE
DEPARTMENT OF AGRICULTURE

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Livestock Premises Registration Goes Statewide

First Step in Building National Animal ID System

NASHVILLE, Tenn. – As of July 1, Tennessee livestock owners and dealers across the state can register their premises for the National Animal Identification System (NAIS) announced state Agriculture Commissioner Ken Givens.

Givens, a cattle operator and native of Hawkins County, was the first to register a farm for the new animal health initiative following the program going statewide. The agriculture commissioner registered his own family farm, the Givens' family farm near Rogersville, which he operates with his brother Bill.

"By registering my family's farm, I hope to show other farmers that it's important they participate not only because they're helping to safeguard animal health, but because it could also help ensure their access to markets in the future," said Ken Givens.

"Although the program is voluntary for now, animal identification is here and will have a tremendous impact on our ability to trace and control animal diseases that could affect Tennessee's billion-dollar livestock industry. Premises registration is the first step for Tennessee livestock owners to participate in the National Animal ID System."

NAIS is a program intended to eventually identify specific animals in the United States and record their movement over their lifespans. It is being developed by USDA and state agencies—in cooperation with industry—to enable 48-hour traceback of the movements of any diseased or exposed animal.

The starting point for building the NAIS is to identify locations, referred to as premises, which manage or hold livestock such as farms, feedlots, auction barns, fair and exposition grounds, and stockyards. System identification of individual animals, or lots in the case of poultry and swine, is not expected to begin until later this year or in early 2006.

Tennessee livestock owners and dealers have several options for registering their premises says Dr. Charles Hatcher, state animal ID coordinator for the Tennessee Department of Agriculture.

"We wanted to make this process as easy and accessible as possible. Farmers can simply obtain a one-page registration form from their local (University of Tennessee) Extension, Farm Bureau or Farm Service Agency office," said Hatcher. "Registration forms will be turned in and collected at those offices, and in the case of the Farm Service Agency, they can assist with online registration in the office."

MORE

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“In addition, farmers can mail their forms directly to the Tennessee Department of Agriculture’s State Veterinarian’s office. In all cases, farmers will receive written confirmation of their premises registration in the mail.”

Hatcher says the premises registration form is also available on the department’s Tennessee Premises Identification System Web site at Tennessee.gov/agriculture/tpis.

On the form, registrants are asked to identify livestock species and to provide basic information including a physical address and primary contact information for their premises in case of an animal disease emergency. Information will then be entered into a national database and premises will be assigned a unique seven-character identifier, or a Premises Identification Number (PIN). The database will be accessed by state and federal animal health officials for the purpose of animal disease protection.

The department successfully tested the premises registration system earlier this season in pilot programs with livestock producers in Giles and Williamson counties. To encourage farmer participation, the University of Tennessee Extension will also conduct premises registration at various field day and educational events throughout the year.

USDA, in cooperation with the Southeastern Livestock Network, will demonstrate electronic ID tag application, reading and tracking of cattle from farm to harvest at the East Tennessee Livestock Center in Sweetwater on July 20. The premises registration and educational event is open to all livestock producers.

For more information about the NAIS or premises identification, contact Hatcher at (615) 837-5120, or email TNpremises.ID@state.tn.us or visit online at www.tennessee.gov/agriculture/tpis.

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Photo of Commissioner Givens registering his family farm available online at the following addresses:

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